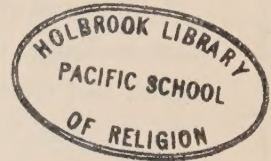


Christianity and Society

The Church and Industrial Man

by

E. R. Wickham



**American Cultural Optimism and
European Pessimism**

by

Ludwig Freund

The Years Which the Locust Devoured

by

Charles Stinnette, Jr.

The Spiritual Underground at Work

by

Winifred Wygal

WINTER 1946

25 CENTS

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

A Quarterly devoted to Christianity and Social Reconstruction

PUBLISHED BY THE FELLOWSHIP OF SOCIALIST CHRISTIANS

FOOD FOR EUROPE

The Fellowship is continuing its program of sending food packages to Europe, particularly to people in Europe who have suffered for their Christian or Socialist convictions. Because of improved conditions in France, Belgium, and Holland, we are no longer sending food there, but centering on Italy, Hungary, and Germany. Those who would like to participate in this program will find directions in our editorial pages.

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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIETY

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EDITORIALS

The United Nations

The United Nations organization is beginning to justify itself as a bridge between two worlds. It does not have the power to establish a stable world order. But it is an important center for the meeting of minds. Some frictions between the powers will be mitigated here which might otherwise produce intolerable tensions.

The immediate cause for optimism is that the Soviets have accepted both the principle of international inspection of atomic energy and the abolition of the veto in the atomic authority. This represents a great gain, though one can never be quite certain that the Russians won't take back with their left hand what they have offered with their right. But whatever our apprehensions, we must be grateful for small favors in our kind of a world; and we can therefore gratefully record that the Soviets are not quite as intransigent as they were during the past year.

They are still bargaining very rigorously on the question of the unification of Germany. Russia wants 25% of the German production as reparations as the price for her compliance in the economic unification of the nation. If that much is granted there is no possibility of securing enough export surplus in manu-

factured goods to buy the food which Germany needs for her industrial and urban populations. There is therefore little likelihood of our granting 25% reparations. But we will probably settle for a fairly high figure which will place us under the necessity of financing German food imports while Russia siphons out the German production.

The German food situation is, incidentally, very acute and will become worse this winter. The American coal strike, and consequent embargoes on overseas shipment, will further aggravate the situation. The effect of our unregulated economy upon the European food situation is incidentally prompting some very angry comment in Britain. We do no doubt appear to be a very drunk and undisciplined nation from the standpoint of our friends and foes in Europe.

On the other hand it would be well for Britain to remember that, whatever the American vices, neither of us has done a good job in Germany. Both engage in equally ruthless evictions of German families from their homes; and neither has taken significant steps to start a real German economy. There is evidence that Britain, despite its labor government, is as afraid of the competition of German production as we are. The fear of German competition as a

reason for tardiness in allowing German industry to arise, is one of the most pathetic aspects of the shortsightedness of nations. Obviously Germany is now an economic desert. Even a moderate revival of German economic life would produce as many markets for us as competitions in our markets. If we don't understand that we will revert to the most flagrant forms of economic nationalism.

The Middle Way

Europe requires, more than anything else, the stabilization of its political and economic life upon the basis of a "middle way" between conservatism and communism. It requires a democratic life, implemented by a socialist program, extending at least to the socialization of heavy industry. There are many indications that Europe wants what she needs, or at least that she definitely rejects both communism and reaction.

Yet Europe can not get what she wants. Both in Italy and in France the middle way is being made untenable by various factors. One factor is the decline of the socialist party in both countries. This decline is partly due to spiritual and ideological weakness, apparent in in every form of continental liberal Marxism except the German variety. German socialism is probably just as weak as French socialism; but the hatred of communism in Germany is so great that the socialists can defeat the communists even if the former lack an adequate program.

In France the difficulty lies partly in the fact that the MRP, the Catholic party which has a socialization program, could make common cause with the socialists but for the fact that the school

and the cultural question divides the two parties. This remnant of the "Kulturkampf" in Europe makes it impossible for France to have a stable non-communist majority in parliament and may mean the destruction of parliamentary government there. The struggle is partly due to the intolerance of Catholicism which traditionally seeks a monopoly in education. In Italy the Catholic party has lost more and more of Don Sturzo's democratic objectives and is becoming more and more an outright clerical party.

Part of the difficulty lies in the vestigial fanaticism of the socialists, who have a dark suspicion that they have more in common with the "Christian west" than with communism, despite the common Marxist inheritance of communism and socialism. But the old anti-Christian bias of socialism is too strong, particularly when it is revived by Catholic, and sometimes, Protestant intolerance. The French socialist is driven by this struggle with Catholicism into the arms of communism; but each impulse in that direction loses votes to communism and more votes to the right. Thus inside of one year the party has lost so much strength that its position of comparative parity with the other two parties has been completely sacrificed. It has less than a hundred votes in the assembly.

Another reason for the destruction of the middle way is undoubtedly American policy. The whole of Europe is poor and radical in economic theory. Its democratic and socialist sentiment is embarrassed by the fact that in rejecting Russia and communism it seems to accept American capitalism. And American capitalism, with its uncritical identification of democracy and free enter-

prise, will do what it can to prevent the enactment of socialist programs in Europe. If America should fall into a depression the effect will be catastrophic in Europe, not only because the prestige of the democratic cause will become even more clouded but also because an American depression will tend to weaken America's sense of continuing responsibility in Europe.

The final cause for the peril to the middle way lies in the fact that the politics of the Catholic hierarchy runs counter to the socialist sentiments of lay Catholic movements of Europe. If the hierarchy could only leave these lay movements alone, they might find a way of coming to terms with the socialist movements and save democracy in Europe. But the hierarchy, as all great social institutions, expresses its impulse of survival in shortsighted terms. It is afraid to trust its destinies to a democratic Europe. Thus in trying to save itself, it makes the conquest of Europe by communism more probable. If it could only learn the truth of the warning: "Whoso seeketh to gain his life will lose it."

The American Future

Let us take stock of our national future. It is not too bright. It is, in fact, almost as problematic as the future of the world community of nations. We seem hell-bent on a "boom and bust" period of economy. We are like the drunkard who confessed, "I am going to get drunk tonight and gosh how I dread it!" It is an interesting fact that many discerning foreign observers predicted that America would not control its economy sufficiently to avoid a post-war depression; and some of them thought that Americans were remarkably com-

placent about their ominous future. It is this very complacency which seems to make the future the more ominous. We are like the people of Israel against whom the prophet Amos prophesied: "They put far away the evil day and cause the seat of violence to come near."

Perhaps it is our very wealth and power which is the cause of our undoing. We are technically the most proficient, as we are in nature's treasures the most favored nation. Therefore we now bestride the narrow world like a huge Colossus. We imagine that our virtue or our democratic genius or some other spiritual endowment has made us what we are. Actually we have not only left all the great and vexing problems, which have brought some of the other industrial nations of Europe low, unsolved but we seem intent upon disregarding every lesson of history in finding a solution for these problems. Our very sense of security is one of the chief reasons for our insecurity. We think we can solve the problems of a modern technical society by turning the clock back and trying to resuscitate an obsolescent *laissez-faire* economy. We are like Babylon of old who, in the words of the prophet, prided herself: "I sit as a Queen and I shall never know sorrow." The prophet rightly added, "Therefore in one moment shall her sorrow come."

Our sorrow may not come in one moment; but we are obviously confronting some pretty rough decades before we will learn the ways of political wisdom and virtue.

If we seek to enumerate our national defects which have brought us to our present situation, one which must be particularly emphasized is that we have a remarkably stupid plutocracy. The

advertisements of the National Association of Manufacturers, which suggested that there were no difficulties facing America which a larger production could not solve, were rather indicative of the source of this stupidity. We are a nation of engineers, technically efficient and politically immature, who imagine that we can overcome every defect in our common life by heaping up more wealth, so that injustices will be obscured. We were, for a long time, the nation of the advancing frontier; and when the frontier reached the other ocean we had an advancing frontier of technical and industrial expansion. Thus we have consistently evaded basic problems of justice by piling increasing production. Now we are in the fantastic position that even a production of 200 billion dollars worth of goods can not ward off an inflation because we have a consumer demand which even our production capacity can not meet. Thus prices become more and more exorbitant. There may well be a recession of prices during the coming year which will not be catastrophic. The real depression may be some years off. But it is difficult to see how our completely unregulated economy can avoid the "bust" which follows "boom" in the long run.

It might be worth noting that the brave effort to build houses for veterans has bogged down completely. American business insisted that if it were left alone it could produce the houses. But such houses as are being built are beyond the reach of the average veteran, or within the reach of ownership of any of the average income groups. This fact alone will ultimately lead to a deflationary spiral. No matter where one looks into our economic picture, the obvious fact is that an economy without any controls

must ultimately work to the disadvantage of the common man. The law of supply and demand is simply inadequate for regulating the vast complexities of a modern society. Every society would do well to preserve as many automatic processes as possible, including the automatic regulators of supply and demand in a free market. That is the modicum of truth in the creed of the modern business man. But an intricate modern society requires increasingly conscious interference with automatic processes just as certainly as the life of man is governed by will, rather than instinct. These American plutocrats would have us believe that we could be healthy if only we would scrap the central nervous system of a vertebrate animal and return to the simplicity of a worm's alimentary canal. It is quite certain that history will take vengeance upon any nation which engages in this effort to return to the primitive. Our primitivism is not quite as dangerous as the Nazi effort to return to the conditions of primitive society. We are merely trying to return to the day when commercialism and industrialism were just emerging from an agrarian society. But every return to past simplicities is both futile and dangerous. Men are fated to constantly recapture the justice and brotherhood of less complicated and earlier orders of society within the greater complexities created by advancing techniques. The road is always forward and never back.

The American Labor Movement

The stupidity of the American plutocracy would not be quite so dangerous, were the American labor movement not so inadequate. Its worst failing is its disunity. The division between the CIO and AFL is now generally regarded

as permanent. John L. Lewis' United Mine Workers introduces a third independent factor into the situation. This disunity means that labor can not achieve political cooperation except under very favorable circumstances. Furthermore the political maturity of the AFL is not much higher than that of an average village storekeeper. It is almost as devoted to "free enterprise" as the National Association of Manufacturers. On the trade union level the division between the two labor camps represents a class struggle between the skilled workers of the old crafts and the semi-skilled workers of modern mass production industries. In politics it is a division between workers who have some sense of the political implications of the struggle for justice and those who think that labor ought to leave politics pretty much alone and stick to its quest for better hours and better wages.

In the present situation the rift in labor represents a new peril to our national health. Labor is not able to look at the whole problem of inflation from the standpoint of the total interests of labor because the various groups are in competition with each other. Thus for instance if John L. Lewis wins his fight against the government, both CIO and AFL may be forced into a competitive series of strikes for higher wages, even though they would like to avoid these strikes, fearing that higher prices may overtake new wage increases as rapidly in the next six months as in the past six months. The picture of labor plunging into strikes, from which it expects few benefits, merely because it can not permit John L. Lewis to "make monkeys" of the AFL and CIO is really quite frightening. It is the more frightening when it is remembered that John

L. Lewis maneuvered the government into the position of using the injunction weapon against him and thus assured the support of the AFL and CIO for his strike, despite their hope that he might be defeated. If one man can put government and the community at cross purposes with labor in such a way, there is something seriously wrong with the whole set-up.

It is the division in the labor movement which is also responsible for the difficulty of starting a new third party. This would logically be the time to start a third party. Whatever virtue the Democratic party possessed has gone out of it; and the party is doomed to failure in the coming election in any event. There can therefore be no good reason to defer the organization of a third party out of fear of imperiling the gains of the past. Yet a third party is an impossibility. If it were organized the AFL would almost certainly move over to the Republican party and would most certainly not cooperate in such a new venture. If the CIO alone supported it, the party would be doomed to perpetual minority status, not to mention the complications arising from the communist contingent in the CIO. The communists, incidentally, want a new party and may launch it within the next months. It will have no other significance than to make confusion on the left more confounded.

One must add to this tale of deficits on the labor front that Wallace has blown himself out of the whole political picture by the action which resulted in his resignation from the cabinet. His only friends now are the communist minority in the CIO. The non-communist majority in the CIO has dismissed him as leader as completely as has the AFL.

There is moreover no other leader of the labor and liberal forces in sight. When one looks at these structural weaknesses of the labor movement, together with the dearth of political leadership on the left, one is ready to forgive the late President Roosevelt many of his sins and shortcomings. It was no small achievement to march through deviously toward a progressive goal, when the army which did the marching is taken into account. It was an army without general officers except the commanding general, surrounded by many bright young aides. The officers below him had their private armies, which were in conflict with each other and were held together as a cohesive force only by their common loyalty to the commander. No wonder that with the death of the commander the whole army is discovered to be an undisciplined mob. It still has a larger number of adherents than its adversaries. But in politics, as in warfare, numbers without cohesion and organization, count for nothing.

Our Constitutional Difficulties

The historian of the future, when he comes to assess the causes of our almost inevitable decline as a powerful and ordered democracy, will find other reasons, beside those already mentioned for our difficulties. One of them, certainly to be considered in future analyses, is the fact that our constitutional system is no longer adequate. Our failure to maintain price controls in the past year, despite the obvious support of a majority of our nation for such control, was due to the fact that an administration, committed to such a policy, could not preserve discipline in congress. It failed in this discipline, partly because the rather uneasy alliance between southern bour-

bons and New Dealers in the Democratic party had completely disintegrated. It would have disintegrated even without the death of Roosevelt, though he might have pulled one or two more tricks out of his bag of endless tricks.

But this whole situation of a congress, fighting a President who is ostensibly the leader of the majority party, would be unthinkable in a genuine parliamentary system. The real difficulty lies in the fact that the executive and the legislative branches of our government are ostensibly independent organs of government, intended to balance each other. This system of balance of power at the heart of government has long since ceased to work. The proof is that in every creative period of American politics since Lincoln, the president partly through native ability and partly through the exigencies of a crisis, has managed to upset the constitutional balance and to make himself the leader of congress as well as the head of the nation. But no genuine parliamentary system, providing for both a responsible majority and a responsible minority, is possible within terms of our constitution. By "responsible minority" is meant a minority which would be forced to assume responsibility for its actions if it succeeded in overturning a government policy. Fortunately we do have something of an unwritten constitution which has changed some of the provisions of the written constitution. We have a popular election of the president, for instance, by the unwritten, rather than the written constitution. But it seems impossible to overcome the weaknesses of the written constitution in the matter of the relation of the presidency to congress.

We are in this matter the victim of a curious fate. The idea which underlies our constitution was derived from early Calvinism. Parliamentary government is derived from the more democratic ideas of later Calvinism and other influences. Early Calvinism was so afraid of anarchy and "faction" if it gave the people political authority, that it devised the idea of separating the various powers of government and balancing them off against each other, in order to avoid tyranny. The idea was contained in embryo in the thought of Calvin himself, when he suggested that government should be in the hands of "plures." He was afraid of one ruler, but also afraid of the rule of the multitude.

Later Calvinism elaborated the concept of the sovereignty of the people. In the British parliamentary system we have a complete triumph over the monarchical executive by the legislative representatives of the people; and the rise of a new executive, the prime minister and the cabinet, from the legislative branch of the government. The two thus have an organic unity which our system does not know. There can be no jealousy between them because the one is the creature of the other.

We do not suggest that it would be possible to overcome the defects of our constitution by some simple series of amendments. We do not, as a matter of fact, know just what can be done about it. Written constitutions are usually not changed basically on this side, but only on the other side, of a social catastrophe. We mention the whole matter only to complete the gloomy picture of our future.

Our future may be brighter than here suggested. There are usually "uncove-

nanted mercies of God" in history which can not be anticipated. But we have already enjoyed so many of them, that it would be rather unjust to other nations to allow us any more. The best chance of survival as a democracy would still be a more humble recognition of the seriousness of our faults, whether they be the structural defects of a constitution, or the temper of a wealth-drunk nation, or the ignorance of America's average man.

The Morals of an Occupation Army

The Senate investigation committee under the chairmanship of Senator Kilgore has received a report from its investigator in our army of occupation which substantiates what many journalists have reported about the morals of the army of occupation. The senatorial committee has decided nevertheless not to conduct a full investigation because the revelations would be detrimental to American prestige. It is a pity that the investigation will not be held on this account, for it would be a very good thing if the American people knew just how an army of occupation operates. For that matter the record of our army is neither better nor worse than those of other occupation forces. The Russian and French record is definitely worse and the British record is no better.

It is for instance universal in every zone that officers live in great luxury in a starving country. The investigator speaks of one general who has eleven servants. Three servants for colonels is certainly not exceptional. Officers usually live in large houses which require the dispossession of a half a dozen German families to make room for one American family. Every intact hotel in

Germany is taken over by our armies. The Germans who travel must use made-over aid raid shelters as hotels. The difference in living standards may be more marked in the matter of food supplies in the American zone than in other zones; for our ordinary soldiers consume 4,000 calories per day while the Germans consume 1,500. The tables of the higher officers have a luxury which can not be matched anywhere in this country except in a few sumptuous hotels.

The fact is that every American is a very wealthy person in Germany compared with any German. The contrast is however only secondarily economic. The contrast is primarily one between power and weakness. Differences in privilege flow from this contrast in power.

It is impossible to find a laboratory in which the effects of power and powerlessness can be more clearly apprehended than in an occupied country. It creates an atmosphere in which even good men are tempted to deal with the natives with an air of patronizing condescension while bad men are cruel and capricious. There were stories in both the English and American zone that about 65% of our officers and even our enlisted men supported German mistresses. The temptations to such relations are enormous, not only because many of the men are separated from their families and many German women have become undisciplined, but also because every German woman is poor and every American soldier is rich. Only a portion of his cigarette ration is adequate to support a woman in greater comfort than even a good position would afford her.

"It is," said an American officer of scrupulous integrity, "difficult not to arrive at completely misanthropic conclu-

sions when one sees the consequences of this situation upon the character of men." One does indeed come to the conclusion that most of the justice we know in the world is primarily achieved through social checks and disciplines and that the power of self-discipline is not very great. For when social checks are removed all ordinary standards of decency, fairness, and kindness disappear. There are of course men of great sensitivity in our occupation forces. Their primary concern is for the welfare of the unfortunate and impotent people who are in their hands. But, by and large, the effect of a great disparity in power upon both private and public morals is catastrophic.

It would be a good thing to have an investigation; for an airing of the facts might mitigate the evils which have developed. But they would only be mitigated. Most of the evils will remain as long as occupation is necessary. Men are not good enough to have each other in their keeping if those who are kept are too weak to resist the greed and lust of power of the keepers. The morals of an army of occupation might well cure anyone of too individualistic notions about the sources of moral discipline. They are not purely social; but they are very preponderantly so. Create a situation in which a man can take advantage of his fellowman with impunity and he will do so, even though his poor impotent fellowman is already at a disadvantage.

Work of the Committee on Food for Europe

At the fall meeting of the Fellowship it was decided to continue our Committee on Food for Europe during the coming winter. However, in view of the

improved conditions in western Europe, it was felt that we should concentrate on getting help to Germany and Hungary. A recent dispatch in the New York Times indicates that these countries are among the neediest in Europe today.

Those of you who are at present participating in the package sending plan, or who have contributed money, will have received a letter outlining our plans and asking for your continued co-operation. If you are not now sharing in this project, we invite you to write to us for the name of a Christian family in Germany to which C.A.R.E. food packages may be sent, in addition to clothing, medicines, etc. If you prefer, the money may be sent to us and we will use it to send packages to these people. The price of the C.A.R.E. packages has been reduced from \$15 to \$10 which makes them the most economical and efficient way of sending food to Europe. We also have the names of needy Hungarian Christian families, but unfortunately C.A.R.E. is not operating in that country and all food must be packed individually.

Instances of extremely urgent need in these countries are plentiful. Dr. Bennett writes of an Hungarian minis-

ter whom he met while in Europe, a Princeton and Yale alumnus, who has recently turned down a scholarship at Yale because he feels that he is needed in Hungary—where he has had to live from public soup kitchens for over a year. We have the name of a German minister who served as chaplain in the prison where those who participated in the attempted assassination of Hitler were kept until their execution, and who is now trying to assist their widows and orphans. Dr. Niebuhr, on his recent return from Europe, supplied the names of other worthy people, while we have also secured names from Dr. Tillich and Dr. Heimann. From Dr. Bela Vasady, Hungarian World Council representative, we have received the names of the faculty of the Protestant Theological Seminary in Debrecen, all of whom are in dire need of help.

We hope that those of you who have helped in the past will continue your support and that many who have not yet done so will wish to share in this effort. For any further information please write to Mrs. Audrey Abrecht, 99 Claremont Avenue, New York 27. Checks may be made payable to Paul Abrecht who is serving as treasurer in Dr. Bennett's absence.

THE CHURCH AND INDUSTRIAL MAN

E. R. WICKHAM

This must necessarily be an untidy article because it is neither a cool historical survey nor nice theological theory—it concerns experiment and practice, and comes from the heat of the fray in which the Church in England is seeking to take the offensive in the warfare against the modern forces of unbelief. The English religious situation is a quite remarkable one, and defies brief analysis, but if your contributor is correct in believing that the industrial towns ultimately determine the cultural quality of the whole country, as of course they do politically (so that a rural or residential picture that does not accord with the urban one may be regarded as abnormal or anachronistic), we should direct our attention to the situation in a large industrial town.

The experiences recorded in this article are drawn from work in the city of Sheffield, a city of over half a million people, center of the iron and steel industry, and itself part of a larger industrial area in Yorkshire. The class stratification is reflected in the churches of that city. Those at the residential west-end of the city would be regarded as fairly "well-attended," some even "very well-attended"; probably the majority of the people in such an area will have occasional relationships with the churches, quite apart from baptisms, marriages, and funerals. The folk there will be largely conservative in politics, and if from industry, will belong to the managerial class. But as you move to the center and east of the city, and to the new housing estates, where the masses of

working-class people live, the churches, in parishes of often well over 10,000 people, are generally poorly attended, often only just surviving and the line between those who worship and those who don't is clearly marked. And not only this, but the age groups in the congregations will largely comprise those of children and youth at the one end, and the 45-plus at the other. The age group of men, and largely women too, that is most formative of society—namely that which is marrying, building homes, raising families, carving out jobs for themselves—seems absent. And of course, it's not surprising that a large percentage of the children of this group, though still sent to the churches while children, fall away from the age of about 12 upwards, when a modicum of freedom from parental control is secured. And this drift away of young people is not prevented by many excellent parochial youth organizations.

The following percentage table (covering England and Wales) showing approximate constant averages for the years 1913-36, is interesting:—

Of every 100 children born:—

- 67 are baptized at Church of England fonts,
- 34 join Church of England Sunday Schools, Catechisms, etc.
- 26 are confirmed,
- 17 lapse after confirmation,
- 9 continue as Easter communicants.

(from a report presented to the Convocations of York and Canterbury in 1944,

on the subject of Confirmation). But several disturbing comments need to be made on these figures. They are average and fail to show the undoubted decline in the later years. An examination of ages of communicants would probably show an increasing average age. The figures do not show the much lower percentage of communicants in working-class areas than in middle-class and rural areas. Finally of course, the figures refer to Easter communicants, which is not a very good measure of the number of really vital Christians in the nation. The larger Non-conformist denominations also show a falling away; the Church of Rome is more successful in holding her members.

The fact is that the vast majority of working-class people, the common people of the nation, who have returned a Labor Government to office, are out of touch with the Christian Church. The tragedy is not so much that people don't "go to church," as that Christian faith is not relevant to the lives of the people. And yet so much more must be said. They are not atheists or avowed agnostics; they would largely call themselves, and like to think of themselves as "Christian"; they want the service of the Church at baptisms, marriages, and funerals; they have a desire that their children should be given Christian education (witness the new education bill); and they will rally for special occasions like National Days of Prayer in wartime. They have a rough but on the whole a good sense of right and wrong (better probably than the more intellectual classes). And although they are often critical of the clergy as a body, and the church as an institution, they are neither anti-clerical nor anti-church. Without

doubt, many more than worship will say their prayers.

This "vestigial" or "residual" Christianity, as we call it, is variously assessed by the Church—some of the clergy are embarrassed by it and would like the issues clearer—others value it and thank God for it, although they are puzzled how to deal with it. William Temple said some interesting things about it in his Beckly Lecture on "Social Witness and Evangelism"

"To a very great extent the nation has drifted away from any distinctively Christian beliefs. This is not to say that it has become irreligious. There is a very widespread Theism—a belief in a righteous God who in a general sense rules the world, though He is not regarded as demanding of the individual any more exacting requirement than what may enable him to say, 'I have not done any harm to anyone.' Goodness is thus thought of primarily in a negative way, and the judgments of God are thought of as falling, if anywhere, on outrageous sinners or on nations which follow a policy that involves misery for multitudes. The idea of sin, as distinct from acts of conscious ill-will, is not often present in men's minds; and the whole notion of redemption is so alien from them as to be unintelligible.

There is a deeper stratum of real though latent faith which is tapped by great national occasions or by some personal or family events, especially bereavement. But here too what we find is a Stoical Theism tinged with Christian emotion. We do both Church and nation a grave disservice if we disparage it. But it is far short of thorough going discipleship."

All of this shows of course how deeply the Christian tradition is embedded in the national life, but it also shows that today we are living on a spiritual capital, inherited from past ages, and which is now dwindling.

In recent years a number of attempts have been made by the churches, sometimes acting denominationally, sometimes in very close co-operation, to bridge the gap between the Church and the world of working-class people. Such attempts, as well as the continued hard work of parish clergy, have shown that the Church recognizes her responsibility, and that she has a genuine desire to reach out to the people. But generally speaking, the weakness of such special attempts lies in their lack of continued local intensity. For example, a week's mission to the works, clubs, and churches of a city by experts gathered from all over the country (and an expert has been defined as "the ordinary man away from home"!) cannot make a lasting impression. Neither for that matter can an occasional visit to working men in a works or public house by a missionary to give religious talks—an effort which leaves the problems of industrial society untouched, and fails to build a bridge between the people and the local Christian communities.

This is not to decry such witnesses of the church—they shout out that the Church cares, and may blaze a trail for more intensive follow-up work. But some of us are conscious now that we must make a far more radical approach to industrial society if we are really to have any effective influence. It would appear that the Church certainly needs two instruments for this task.

One, and the most important, is the development of reformed local churches,

capable of receiving men and women who have no experience of the church tradition, and which can be recognized as real communities of people (as distinct from atomized, merely "worshipping" congregations), with a common mind, and a relevant social purpose flowing from common faith and worship. This prime need of reformed local churches is recognized by the recently published Report on Evangelism of the Church Assembly of the Church of England—"Ultimately the evidence for the credibility of the Gospel in the eyes of the world must be a quality of life manifested in the Church which the world cannot find elsewhere." But to attain this objective demands of course, a revolution in the Church—beginning with a revolution to deliver us from a whole variety of theological corruptions. But the revolution goes on, showing itself in different ways in different denominations. Moreover, it is not merely a revolution in ideas—in places, it takes embodiment in church structure, and so embraces the whole local Christian community. To a growing number in the Anglican Church, it means a recovery and synthesis of our Catholic and Reformation traditions—expressed chiefly in the centrality of a simple Parish Communion for worship, and the weekly Parish Meeting for the forging of the common mind and for the initiation of Christian action in the parish. By such reformation, decadent, formal, and dying churches are brought to new life—new organic communities of Christians appear with a common faith that is relevant to the life of the wider society in which they are set.

But there is the second instrument for the bridging of the gulf between the Church and industrial society. We need

pecially trained and appointed representatives of the Church to make direct contact with the world of industry, wherein is so largely determined the nature of society, its security or insecurity, its wealth or poverty, its class divisions, and even its housing, education, amusements, habits, and thought-forms. We cannot claim to have advanced so far in this as we have in the reform of local churches. As yet, such a specialist appointment is regarded as a novelty and a luxury, to be ill-afforded with such acute shortage of manpower in the Church. But such experimental work is taking place, and although it may be unwise to generalize from results that are still from an experimental stage, it may confidently be affirmed that many and varied are the possibilities if such work can be further developed and intensified. The following will indicate some of the possibilities in this industrial work of the Church:—

1. Chaplains can be attached to the larger industrial units. There is a good deal of suspicion of this development however, largely from timid elements in the Church who are worried that a chaplain may be regarded as a “tool of the management,” a “boss’s man”—so that the resultant would be an even greater contempt by the workers, of the Church, as a bulwark of capitalism. Again, it is alleged, that a work’s religion would develop, and so supply a prophylactic against true religion. Indeed, the factory chaplaincy would “represent an alliance of the weakest conception of churchmanship with the most sinister tendencies within industry”!

Clearly, if there is “zeal without knowledge,” such dangers do exist; the Church could be “used,” as indeed she has been. But in fact, such dangers can

be exaggerated—and so far from the chaplain being regarded as a boss’s man, he is more likely in the present situation to be suspect by management than by workers. Certainly, where opposition in industry is aroused to the idea of a worker’s chaplain, it is from management, whereas the writer knows of no case where such a proposed scheme has been other than approved by the workers, as represented by a shop stewards’ committee, or a works’ council. And the chaplain goes as a representative of the Church, his salary paid by the Church, armed with a Gospel which though politically relevant, please God, is something other than a political program.

What does a work’s padre do? It must depend upon the nature of the industry, opportunity afforded, times and lengths of meal breaks, etc. The padre needs to be an opportunist, and the great thing is to make opportunities for meeting and talking with men. In a large steel works, for example, all sorts of opportunities exist—three or four shifts are working and each of these is slightly staggered, so that through almost all the day men are “off work.” Some eat in canteens, where the padre can lunch and talk with all at the table; others have little shacks in their departments, in the machine shop or forge, where men gather for meals, and breaks, and where the half-hour lunch break easily extends to 40 minutes, giving ample time for a discussion. And indeed, in some processes, the men are slow workers if they haven’t finished their food by the time the meal break commences! Others sit around their furnaces, or outside the shop, squatting on their haunches in the sun. No dearth of opportunities to talk to men if you want to! And do they talk? They do!

On everything. And in Britain politics and religion are the two things men will most earnestly argue about. What more could the padre want? Anyway, what else is there to talk about? And it becomes crystal clear that these men have never consciously given up Christian faith; they have never really known what it was. And what they have known—the Bible stories, the hymn singing and the pietism, being apparently without relevance to the life they have to live, the pressures of that hard life have easily forced them away from what they have known.

What are the results of meeting the men like this? The results would be sufficient in terms of personal relationships established, and barriers broken down alone, and also in the improved reputation of the Church. In every group of men, someone will say—"Why doesn't the Church come more to the people? Didn't Christ go out into the highways and byways?" and so on. Simple comments, but not lacking in profundity, indicative of the social superiority which workers attribute to the Church, and a measure of the gulf they feel between the Church and themselves. Recently a pastor from the Church of Norway spent a day at a steel works with the writer; apart from his amazement at seeing drop-stampings made, and steel bars sawn up (as he said, "They do this in Norway, but with wood!") his greatest surprise was the friendliness and geniality of the men to the padre. Were they socialist? Indeed, solidly! "It couldn't happen like this in any other country in Europe," was his comment.

But there are other results than these somewhat imponderable ones. Regular discussion groups can be formed, sometimes inside works, and sometimes out-

side in the evenings where men will bring their friends and wives. Some come to commit themselves in faith, accept church membership, and prove invaluable in their own works in creating interest and discussion on the Christian faith and its implications—in a way that those who have been brought up in the churches rarely do. Others just stay in discussion groups. And there are tangible results that appear in the following.

2. Another field of work for an industrial specialist of the Church is in part-time education in industry. The 1944 Education Act legislates that as soon as it is practicable, the school-leaving age will be raised to 16, and that up to 18 years compulsory part-time education shall take place for a day a week, or its equivalent for a continuous period. The Act visualizes the setting up of Young Peoples' Colleges, but in fact many of the larger industrial units have already set up their own training schools, sometimes entirely under the authority of the particular industrial unit, and in other instances, for their own employees, but under the jurisdiction of the local educational authority. Sometimes lads are freed to attend for a day a week at local technical colleges. The question of curriculum in such schools is very important, depending on the aims of the educating authority. But the Ministry speaks of physical (training), practical (vocational), general and elective subjects—it speaks of character development, leadership, good citizenship, democratic community, as falling within the aims of such education. A Ministry pamphlet recognizes that "perhaps a very large group of students, may express a wish to study the Bible, or the history of religion or of a particular Church, or to

discuss ethical problems from a religious point of view. There is often a vigorous development of the religious sense during adolescence and there is every reason for meeting and guiding this spirit of inquiry."

But in spite of these excellent recommendations, the Ministry of Education is not likely to invite the Church as such to make a contribution in this field of teaching. But if on the other hand, the Church seeks out opportunity to assist in making this educational venture a success, by stimulating young people to think seriously on the many problems of adult life, then her assistance may be welcomed. As the scheme crystallizes out, therefore, it is most desirable for a specialist to explore the possibilities. In fact, already it has proved possible for the padre to organize discussion groups for apprentices in a number of work's schools—the problems of the new adult world of industry have been considered, and at least the all too easy drift into an uncritical acceptance of adult standards is made a little harder. In one instance it has led to a number of young miners deciding to form a Young Miners' Club, a by no means bad idea, at a time when heightened status of miners in general, and good leisure time activities for young miners in particular, are most necessary.

3. An industrial chaplain can also be free to initiate discussions with corporate groups in industry, who otherwise could hardly ever know that Christianity was not unrelated to the very problems with which they exist to deal! Obviously there are the three important groups—management, personnel management, and Trades Unions. It is here particularly, that his concern must be more than pastoral and evangelistic. Christian principles have to be worked out

and expounded, Christian judgments have to be made, the nature of ends and means to be considered, and the difficult line drawn between the area where proper guiding principles are vitally necessary, and that area where a proper technical autonomy should be observed. It must be confessed that far more opportunities need to be sought for conferring with these various groups. But some start has been made.

A number of conferences have been held with the Institute of Personnel Management, on "Youth in Industry," "Education in Industry," "Some Particular problems in the Mining Industry," etc. Without doubt, Christianity is strikingly relevant to the problems of personal welfare, and Christians who are trained in industrial welfare work can make an invaluable contribution. For example, vocation, responsibility, incentives, human problems, personal relationships, social purposes are the day to day concern of personnel officers, and clearly Christianity is pregnant with significance for each of these.

Also discussions with Trades Unions officials, Union branch meetings, and Works Councils have taken place. It is here that the spokesman of the Church comes in for a beating, and yet strangely enough, for a welcome too. It is here that the Church is attacked for her privilege, caste, her all too frequent alliance, certainly in the past, with the wealthy classes (in spite of magnificent exceptions that are remembered), and of course her compromise with Fascism in some Continental countries, and also her divisions, alleged snobbishness, and a host of lesser sins. In contradistinction to such an institution, men will rise up in true prophetic manner as the defenders of the simple ethical teaching of

Jesus, who commanded men to love their neighbors as themselves. Many of their criticisms are acutely penetrating, particularly those concerning the deficient social witness of the Church; but on the other hand, many of their judgments are over simplified, and fail to understand the full purpose, and nature of the Christian Church. On such occasions, the innate Pelagianism of the English people has magnificent expression—one can thank God for much of it, at the same time believing that we need a strong dose of Barthianism in our Churches as a corrective of this prevalent and lovable heresy. But there is so much to talk about. To visit a branch meeting is like a reunion of relatives who know that there is a tie between them, have separated through a family quarrel, and have come together after many years. There are recriminations, still misunderstandings, confessions, but a general feeling that it is a good thing to meet again.

The Trades Unions are in a fluid situation at the present. Organized for a hundred years as an opposition force, they now find themselves allied to Government, pledged to support the economic recovery of the country, and yet still set within capitalist industry for the most part. Union meetings are often very badly attended; there is danger of a growing gulf between members and leaders—and facile political hopes and post-war tiredness lead to a grave lack of social responsibility at the level of the people. The Unions, as also

the local political parties, are not happy about the situation. Clearly Christians in the industrial situation have a responsibility and an opportunity here, as also has a representative of the Church in contact with unions. All that John C. Bennett wrote in his article in the 1945 summer issue of *Christianity and Society*. (“Realistic Theology and Social Action”) is most relevant. Moreover we now have in Britain an accumulated mass of thinking and writing on the bearing of Christianity on politics, industry, economics, and on the social order as a whole, that can be brought down from the rarified atmosphere of theory, into the arena where the Church meets men in the industrial situation.

Increasingly it becomes clear that we need a far better trained laity, trained in a basic knowledge of the Faith, and competent to express that faith in terms of the secular calling. Meanwhile, and alongside that training of the laity, we could use many more specialists to pursue this work of establishing communications with the various industrial groups, to make contact with those large industrial units that determine in so many ways the nature of our social life and thinking, and to meet the men and women who work in them. The “anguish of spirit and cruel bondage” that deafened the children of Israel to the Word of God, was an industrial conditioning. Still today, there are Biblical insights that can emancipate the spirit of industrial man.

AMERICAN CULTURAL OPTIMISM AND EUROPEAN PESSIMISM

By LUDWIG FREUND

European culture is mature in comparison with American culture. Yet maturity with nations as well as individuals may indicate either wisdom or decadence. Immaturity may, on the other hand, indicate vitality or superficiality. It is relevant, therefore, for the critical thinker to cut through the patterned pseudo-intellectual analysis which assumes *a priori* that Europe because it is old is wise and America because it is young is superficial.

In Europe, long before World War II, Spenglerian pessimism which proclaimed the utter morbidity and impending doom of Occidental Culture, became the manifestation of a general Continental attitude. Under the pressure of history, Europe has become cynical and defeatist. Cultural pessimism, not without profound overtones, prepared the way for the *revolution of nihilism*. The European had come to believe that his cultural burden was too much for him and he longed for simplification, which is basically a synonym for negation. The basis of such defeatism lies in the unresolved antinomy of Western culture which had adopted but not resolved the contradictory ideologies of a Greek culture which was characterized by a searching critical mind and a Hebrew culture which was insistent upon its definition of life in terms of faith. A second obvious antinomy is found in the contradiction between the Christian ethic and the continued influence of the acquisitive, imperial dreams of Rome. It is impossible

for man to believe, on the one hand, that he should love his neighbor and be humble before God, and on the other hand, to participate in a culture in which power, wealth, war and aggrandizement have characterized the history of State and Church. Is it any wonder that, with such unresolved contradictions, the European became skeptical of his own cultural foundations? But how could he escape in view of the tremendously rich and versatile sources upon which his culture fed? Should he follow Friedrich Nietzsche's advice and demolish his culture? How could he be sure that a new and superior culture would arise as Nietzsche prophesied? Or should he follow Kierkegaard or Tolstoy who, each in his own way, pronounced as meaningless and worthless all extant human social and cultural endeavor?

* * * *

Before the science of modern mechanics had emerged, man of the Western World would look at the stars as Francis of Assisi had taught him. He would conceive them as somewhat related and akin to himself, the sun as his brother, and the moon as his sister. The whole world to him was interwoven with myths and miracles. Modern astronomy and physics destroyed this mythical relationship. The Universe was larger than man had realized, and it obeyed certain natural laws. Copernicus and Kepler in the 16th century, although still to be considered close to the Scholastic mind at least in tone and

attitude, introduced the era of scientific revolution whereby nature, not God, became the center of speculation; and measurement, not faith, the decisive method to be applied. The methods and results attained by these two natural scientists were popularized and completed by Galileo. Because of the subsequent scientific revelations a cleavage was introduced in the western world. While many people clung and still cling to the version of what they call "unadulterated faith," others accepted the theory of mechanism so thoroughly that they explained everything in terms of material parts and particles in motion. This latter tendency has persisted well up to our time, when the principles of such physical explanation of the world and of life have even been tried in and applied to the fields of biology, psychology, and sociology, not without serious damage to these fields.

Alongside the scientific process of tentative integration, which sometimes developed into over-simplification, another cleavage was introduced. Machiavelli, in the beginning of the 16th century, formally introduced the theory that power alone was the instrument and object of politics. Machiavelli's *Prince* was closer to historical truth than Thomas More's *Utopia*, or Hugo Van Groot's *Natural Rights*, or Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Status Naturalis*. Alongside of these purely theoretical speculations on justice and the good society existed a reality of brutal political force.

Finally it should be remembered that the industrial revolution upset many of society's cherished institutions without ever offering satisfactory substitutes.

The European man, bewildered by the variants, the tones and half tones of

promise and defeat, eventually sought a solution in a simplification of existence which would destroy the variants which were so perplexing and contradictory to to him. The community was broken, or rather its promise was forsaken, and society was divided into spheres of secularity and orthodoxy, enlightenment and religion, materialism and idealism.

Here were in juxtaposition mutually hostile forces. Schopenhauer in despair denounced life and intellect. He sought refuge from confusion in the Buddhists' idea of eternal suffering, in the formula of a blind and aimless will governing all life, and really foreshadowed the will to die in modern Europe in his philosophy that "not to live is better than to live."

Nietzsche, of course, came closer to realizing the frustration of European developed culture than any other man of his day. His judgment was not dispassionate enough to remain free of errors and exaggerations, but he drew his own conclusions from Darwin in proclaiming the superiority of "bios" over "logos," of biological strength over logical reasoning. The struggle for survival turned into the will to power; and the survival of the fit into the breeding of a race of mastermen out of whose midst at some future time would emerge the godlike phenomenon of the Superman who was to be law unto himself. All of this is dogmatism of the first class, but it emerged from the undercurrent of a deep insight into Europe's cultural deadlock. He had learned from Kant that absolute truth was unattainable, from Schopenhauer that the centuries' long struggle of the philosophers for a logical explanation of existence was in vain. His critique of the traditional concepts of ethics was more ruthless than

Schopenhauer's, and he became the most bitter—and the most unjust—opponent of Christianity. "God is dead," he exclaimed; and from his pragmatist perspective there was nothing else to do but to realize a world order in which the biologically (physically as well as mentally) most vigorous human specimens would take over the place of God in a sort of Nietzschean version of "Goetterdaemmerung." This act, however, would presuppose a long-term process which would have to begin with a complete revaluation of all values—a cultural revolution which would leave nothing untouched. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, there must first be a state of Nihilism which would completely undo the culture of Europe as it had developed through the past. The cultural revolution—he predicted—would be carried out by "the blond beast" which would not be concerned with problems of truth, meaning, and goodness, but would stand squarely beyond good and evil, and would want to live a heroic and dangerous life. Despite some erudite protestations to the contrary, here were some of the moral—or rather amoral premises of Nazism.

Bergson as well as Spengler have taken their clues from Nietzsche's intuitions. So have the scores of 20th century European writers who denounced reason, culture, and society. The popular French nationalistic writers and theoretical fore-runners of Fascism, Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras, belong in this category. However, it remained for the 19th century thinkers like Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, and Karl Marx, who likewise condemned developed culture, to introduce pregnant versions of their own.

Hegel's pan-logism and idealism had encouraged man of the middle 19th cen-

tury to consider himself as a possible embodiment of absolute reason. Protestant, especially Lutheran, theology had become largely imbued with Hegel's point of view, which identified God with Absolute Reason, and which would therefore strongly suggest the idea of Divine immanence. In contrast to this, the Danish thinker Søren Kierkegaard launched his attack upon what he called the "smugness" of the theology of his day. His ideas culminated in a deeply pessimistic theological view of man and civilization.

Kierkegaard's so-called dialectical theology did not find widespread attention in the Protestant circles of Continental Europe until after the first World War, when Karl Barth took up Kierkegaard's line of thought. Barth was also inspired by the Russian novelist Dostoevsky's "tragic sense of life," which carried the implication that only through suffering can human life be brought to realize its highest possibilities. In Barth the contempt for all that is human, including religion and the Church, the distrust of reason as an avenue of religious experience, became so thoroughgoing at times that his most distinguished disciple, Emil Brunner, felt compelled to part company with him. In prominent European religious philosophy of the years between the two great wars, regardless whether we consider the Protestants Barth, Brunner, Tillich; or the Roman Catholics Maritain, Gilson, Dawson; or the Russian-Orthodox Berdyaev, the tragic sense of life is omnipresent. However different on the constructive side they may be, they are unanimous in their criticism of modern man who has fallen victim to his own civilization and who is doomed to suffer by it. They represent the theological pessimism of Europe.

Leo Tolstoy, conversely, did not care about faith in God or anything as long as people would practice love. "Do not resist the evil" is the motto he borrowed from Christ. The evil itself is force, violence in any form. In consequence, Tolstoy analyzed culture to show that everything in it is basically wrong, since it was or is supported by force. Religion, the Church, the State, the courts, property, socialism, the political parties, the Parliament, democracy, revolution, "everything must be changed." Even Lenin and Trotsky did not go further in their radical negation of existing patterns than did Tolstoy. The only law which he recognized was that of the individual conscience itself. For all practical purposes he was the prototype of an anarchist.

Karl Marx, finally, another of the great 19th century founders of modern European culture trends, described all culture as class culture. The "ideological super-structure" of religion, morals, philosophy, art, and law is determined by the economic conditions expressive of the class structure which in turn determines the political power. The rules of reckless competition and profit which are the basic characteristics of the capitalist-bourgeois age will lead to unending wars, bankruptcies, and to the impoverishment of the bulk of bourgeois people. Their economic independence will be blotted out by large corporations, and this will swell the ranks of the proletarian class. Since, according to this view economic control and political power are interlocked, and since control is ultimately vested in the most economically productive class, the labor class will be the ruling class of the future. While Marxism is a logical answer to distortions created by the Industrial Revolution, it

is the dangerous logic of over-simplification along which it moves.

We have discussed all these Continental systems of thought, because all of them have been most influential upon the modern European, not only upon the German or Russian, mind. All of them deny the idea of progress as applying to the developed cultural institutions of European society. All of them are expressions of cultural defeatism and of deep pessimism as to the values at hand. *And each one of them found a tremendous response and following in Europe!* There were hardly any thinking people left whose minds, before as well as after Hitler's advent, were not shaped by either these philosophies or by one of their modern re-interpretations.

There were, of course, in pre-Hitler Europe many literary men with culturally liberal, humanistic and optimistic views. Their popular influence, however, could not compare with those of the cynics. This holds true not only of Germany, Russia and Italy, but also of the nominally democratic French nation. In fact, the writings of such anti-cultural and anti-humanistic minds as Barrès, Maurras and their followers admittedly found a larger audience than did the literary products of more constructive thinkers of France.¹ And in pre-Fascist Italy the popular appeal of the Germans Marx, Hegel, Nietzsche; of the Italian neo-Machiavellians Mosca and Pareto, exceeded the influence of the humanist Croce whose abstruse, heavy writing eluded the intellectual grasp even of the

¹ See e.g. Buell et al., *Governments of Europe*, Section "France," . . . Chapter: "Behind the Stage," New York, 1936, pp. 462-464. Also Henri Peyre, "The French Situation: A French View," in *Political Science Quarterly*, Sept. 1944, particularly pp. 380-381. The latest reports on the "new" philosophical fads of the Parisian intelligentsia indicate a continuation of prewar skepticism and pessimism.

average educated person, let alone the people at large. Even in Croce's work there is absorbed an element not only of Hegel's "Absolute Reason" but of Hegel's as well as Marx's dialectical phases of History.

The problem of Europe is largely one of rescuing that Continent from its philosophy of cynicism and despair. The spiritual aimlessness of the second post-war era impels Europeans again to grab at merely political solutions. There may be some gradual strengthening of theological philosophy here and there. If there is, it has not as yet grown into a mighty force capable of shaping the lives and moods of the masses, apart from superficial and material hopes. The basic problem has already proved to assume ever more menacing implications, since no occupying power aside from the Soviet seems prepared to offer a working philosophy in substitution of the old ones. And the Soviet solution is destructive of much that was good and worthwhile in Europe's ancient culture. It represents the Marx-Lenin-Stalin brand of cultural cynicism, and as such the Russian contribution can hardly be termed an act of "rescue" from Continental ills. Eventually, the Continent's cultural solution must be worked out by the peoples of the Continent themselves. No "foreign" and super-imposed culture pattern can remain permanent, unless it is intrinsically and genuinely endorsed by the indigenous group.

Our analysis should make apparent an important psychological difference between Europe and America. Europe is culturally and essentially pessimistic. America, however, is still largely optimistic.

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While America quite normally has taken over an indefinite number of European culture traits, she has quite naturally also—fused them into a mold of her own. While the pessimistic writings of Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis were accorded a sensational reception at the time they were published, the effect was purely temporary. The rank and file of American as well as British people are unlike the continental Europeans in that they do not too seriously allow *systematic philosophies* to influence their everyday ideas, responses, and attitudes. As a consequence, the tenor of American discussion has remained "practical" and optimistic, and in spite of the pessimistic writings of a few authors, America still favors dreams of practical world perfection.

From the average American's point of view, everything can be managed. Has he not been successful in building the world's most wealthy and powerful nation? To him the socio-cultural problem is primarily one of outer success and material welfare. To him the solution of the world's problems can be found in providing world markets, rising standards of living, and full employment. His cultural ideal is still largely utilitarian. While the European is submerged in gloomy self-analysis, the average American optimistically presents his economic solutions and outward possibilities for a healthy post-war world.

It has been suspected that the reason for his doing so is that—unlike Europeans—he lacks knowledge of real national disillusionment and defeat. Writers like John Steinbeck describing the wretchedness of human existence, or like the anthropologist Ralph Linton—who dedicated a book "to the next civili-

zation"²—seem to have enough faith left in present institutions to advocate social perfection on the basis of normal present-day trends. For instance, Mr. Linton asserts that "the understanding of the nature of man and the forces which are operative in society . . . will enable mankind for the first time in its million years of existence to shape its future deliberately and intelligently . . ."³ His pride in the findings of social and psychological sciences leads him to exclaim that we are on the road toward "the greatest triumph of man's career" compared to which "even the conquest of interplanetary space sinks into insignificance beside it."⁴ If this is pessimism, then it is a strange brand. It cannot conceal its birthplace, which is optimistic America at its plainest.

American optimism tends toward experimenting with the material at hand rather than toward acknowledgement of defeat. Evolution, not revolution, is the American approach to social and cultural problems. No single factor is more symbolic of this fact than is that American "revolutionary" classic, namely Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. Among the representatives of cultured America, among the leaders and molders of the American cultural mind, we cannot think of one (if we forget the scant influence exerted by Brooks Adams) who would openly, with conviction and with power of persuasion, acknowledge defeat and profess revolution. Pessimism is the mood of resignation in or revolt against what is considered an inescapable and tragic fate. It springs from the absence of a belief in the possibility of progress on the basis of what *is*. Apart from the

single exception already mentioned, we can detect neither a prominent and consistent expression of cultural resignation nor of violent uprising against a seemingly unavoidable disaster in any relevant writing of either present-day or yesterday's America.⁵ We may ignore the scattered, rather inconsistent remarks originating from a temporary preoccupation with either Spengler or Hitler. Even the revolutionary inclined among our Marxians, officially at least, have to profess that they want change merely on the basis of this country's existing institutions. Surely, the pessimism and cynicism ascribed by some experts to a whole branch of modern American literature⁶ pale off by comparison with the scope, radicalism and vigor of their European counterparts.

An outstanding example of innate American optimism is our native variety of philosophical Pragmatism. Pragmatism is a product of skepticism. It does not recognize absolute truth. According

⁵ Reinhold Niebuhr's writing has been occasionally misinterpreted as an expression of theological pessimism. If I understand Niebuhr correctly, his system of thought represents a synthesis of the "new" Continental orthodoxy of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner on one hand, and American liberal optimism on the other. He censures America for being youthfully and romantically unrealistic in her confidence of being able to establish the Kingdom of God on earth by collective effort. Society is largely composed of sinners and inclines toward corrupting the virtues of the individual through collective self-deceptions. European dialectical orthodoxy, however, has been so pessimistic about human nature that, in Niebuhr's judgment, it has in effect destroyed all moral distinctions and has rendered history meaningless. While no absolute limit can be placed upon the degree to which society may approximate the ideal, every achievement—according to Niebuhr—will nevertheless remain in the realm of approximation. It seems to me that Niebuhr's version, while betraying a profound understanding of the cultural paradoxes, still is typically American in its activist mood and historic optimism.

⁶ See e.g. Oscar Cargill, *Intellectual America*, New York, 1942, Chapter V; also Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The American Spirit*, New York, 1942, Chapter VII.

² *The Study of Man*, New York and London, 1936.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 482.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 489.

to its view, relative "truth" is humanly manageable and can be measured in terms of utility and efficiency, of "success" and the practical outcome. Friedrich Nietzsche, the 19th century Continental pragmatist, carried this philosophical trend to its ultimate conclusion. With cynical logic, he developed it into the conceptual formula for complete nihilism and cultural revolution. Our American pragmatists shrink from these consequences. While upholding the idea of *relative* truth, they nevertheless champion the cause of reason. While sometimes deriding religion, they manage to maintain faith in pure science and its rationalizations. In "measuring success and practical consequences," they have shown a tremendous and dogmatic faith in the possibilities of the scientific intellect and its influence upon mankind.

Another fitting example is furnished by our labor unions which bargain for less hours, higher wages, and what they consider decent working and living conditions. Most Continental labor parties and unions—under the wholesale influence of the philosophy of Karl Marx—used to reject even the *idea* of bargaining, since it would imply the recognition of the existing order of society. Their aim was and probably still is the overthrow of the whole system of society and the elimination of class differences through the dictatorship of the proletariat. In other words, the rank and file of Continental labor feels that there can be no justice under existing conditions of a "capitalist society." American labor on the whole shuns such ideological radicalism. It works and hopes for steady improvements on more or less practical grounds.

Our national optimism is, on the whole, a happy heritage. It is a source

of great strength. Two questions, however, remain unanswered. First, will our outlook equip us to take part in the shaping of the destiny of other nations which have been materially less fortunate than we? Second, shall we be able to preserve our optimism in the future, or shall we eventually become affected by old-world pessimism? These questions, interesting as they are, transcend the scope of this paper.

The point we want to make in summing up the analysis, is threefold:

(1) There is in *Continental* Europe a philosophical and cultural trend of pessimism which gained ascendancy in the educated as well as the popular mind.

(2) As long as the cultural skepticism and the pessimistic mood toward developed culture prevail in all their ramifications, they must be feared as agents of cultural self-dissolution. As such they operated in the classic antiquity when skepticism and stoicism gradually disintegrated the proud edifice of Greek and Roman culture. If Europe should prove unable to overcome this inner trend, the question is not out of place whether any measure of outward assistance, from America or anywhere else, will be able to eliminate the danger of new cultural-moral cataclysms.

(3) America is still happily free of this cultural trend as a popular mood. In comparing America's culture with Europe's, one is tempted to over-censure this country for its blindness and self-righteousness, its lack of philosophy and cultural depth. Yet self-criticism must not blind us to the precarious implications of much of Europe's philosophy. To be sure, there is great depth in much of European pessimistic thought. Yet, viewed from the empirical consequences

of our different attitudes toward the established values of Occidental culture, we have ostensibly no reason to regret that as a nation we have remained affirmative and hopeful. Criticism of the American contemporary mood is possible on the plane of theology. But theology cannot function with integrity if it is unconsciously assumed that the profoundly cynical stream of European thought is the self evident pivot of new theological vitalities. Nor should it be

assumed that we cannot learn from the profound insights of historical and contemporary European *pessimism*. Yet we can only learn from our own historic perspective. We shall only bring nihilism here if we naively imitate those uniquely European forms of thought which are in psychological and spiritual contradiction to the historic roots and present realities which have shaped us into a people whose mood and attitude is peculiar unto ourselves.

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THE YEARS WHICH THE LOCUST DEVoured

By CHARLES STINETTE, JR.

Lewis Mumford, in his book *The Techniques of Civilization*, holds the view that *time* rather than the machine is the symbol of our civilization. He points out that the monks invented the clock in order to mark off the periods of worship. Time is our own precious treasure—ours alone—hoarded in memory and projected upon the future.

We come to this moment laden with the impressions of time—the remembered and the forgotten past. Every memory plays its part now—even those days seemingly lost in bitter and vitiating war—the *years which the locust devoured*. There is a terror about lost time. It haunts us as does a nightmare. And that terror of lost time is part and parcel of the emotional carriage of every veteran (and, I suspect, of every other living being in this violent age).

Some periods in recent history have actually borne the name *peace*. They are marked by strife—the bonus march of 1932, the bread lines of depression years or the Chicago massacre of May, 1937. They were years of peace as is also this year of famine and strife. The devastation of war has found a new rival in the violence of peace.

We, the living, have been nurtured in violence. If not in yourself, look into the lives of your friends for the mark of this turmoil. They have lived through the aftermath of the last war, the deprivation of the twenties, and the harsh struggle with fear and insecurity of the

thirties which culminated in war. If this is true among your acquaintances and in America, elsewhere it is doubly true. A character in a recent novel sees the whole tragedy of our world written in the faces of Europe's starving children and he exclaims, "They don't play games any longer between classes. Imagine a whole continent where children don't play."

Fascism, the crystallization of violence, came upon us suddenly with its hands at mankind's throat. And only at the eleventh hour did it startle us into action—even then not fully committed. But in the moment that we answered the challenge of fascism we revealed the nature of our age. Like those people in Joel's day, our actions, what we did or did not, had suddenly become the vital concern of all people. Then we knew that we could not escape the world nor forget its violence. In the darkest moments of recent history we have learned full well the meaning of those words in Joel:

"The Day of the Lord comes,
Return to me with your whole heart—
Rend your heart and NOT your
garments."

Now many hearts have been torn asunder. Some men who never bothered before have learned in prayer the religion of concern for God and man. Surely we have learned the lesson that when darkness covers the skies, it casts a shadow over the face of all men. The fact of interdependence bears the indelible stamp of modern history.

But there is a deeper and more significant lesson of our time. It is that men learn in suffering what they do not choose to learn in love. The solidarity of the welfare of the world has been manifested in the world's peril. We should have learned long ago from the Hebrews that individual and SOCIAL sin amount to the same calamity for the people. There was in Israel little of our false distinction between personal and National or international sins which bred our isolationism. Even in sin the Hebrew people were united. It cannot be stressed too often that what is happening in the world today is our own costly way of learning to face ourselves and our world honestly. Even now when the embers of war have not burned out, there are many *good people* (who either have forgotten or were untouched by war) who by their new isolationism join the ranks of those who taunted Jesus with the words, "Lord, when saw we Thee . . .?"

Among the things which should belong to our peace should be the memory that in December 1941 war came to those who felt no responsibility for the rest of the world as well as to internationalists. Many men who wanted no part of war were forced to take an active and bloody part in war. I believe that the terrible necessities which have been laid upon us have brought us to a deeper understanding of the world's sin and our part in it. It seems significant that those who have known what war is—the veterans—have been most active in the insistence of justice at home and abroad. It just may be that he who became involved in war will become,

"The repairer of the breach,
The restorer of paths to dwell in."

The trumpet of violence has sounded in our age; it brought the people to their knees. It forced men to face facts—which often included facing themselves. It made them not spectators buying off the Hitler with a Czechoslovakia, not like the women of Jerusalem who wept for Jesus but rather those who weep for themselves and their own children.

It is the part of religion and health for us to learn that we have reason to weep. If we have learned that we are lost—if we have learned that we have reason to repent—if we can truly say,

"Spare Thy people, O Lord,
And make NOT thine heritage a
reproach."

If we can say these things and strip ourselves of all pretense in seeking God wholeheartedly, these violent years have not been lost. They have taught us what we could NOT have learned otherwise.

It is just possible that out of all the suffering and loneliness and agony the world has known, may come that greater peace which men can neither dream nor legislate into existence.

The years which the locust devoured—the last years—can and must be the years followed by the springtide and the full blossoming of man's hope. Our years have not been lost if in this wilderness we have found the strong love of God.

"Fear not, O Land
Exult and rejoice
For the Lord has done great things!

* * * * *

And I will repay you for the years
Which the locust devoured
And you shall know that I am in the
midst of Israel."

THE SPIRITUAL UNDERGROUND AT WORK

By WINIFRED WYGAL

Because some of the leaders of the project about to be analyzed are active in the Fellowship of Socialist Christians; because the issues involved are identically those which constitute the Fellowship program; and because there is far too little cross-fertilization among Christian groups in America, there is point in a partial discussion of the Student Staff Seminar of Student Christian Association Movement which occurred for two weeks in July 1946 at Estes Park, Colorado.

About one hundred and fifty men and women, chiefly professional staff of the student movement, accented an on-going regime of staff study by this Seminar, in special preparation for which there had been the kind of self-imposed reading and discussion which at the same time served the staff study process and opened the way for the intensified reflections of the Seminar.

The achievement of fellowship among members and leaders which is always important to a Christian movement is most surely served by hard work, hard study and hard praying together. In this case the group did all three. More adequately to fulfill their function in the colleges, these people set themselves the task of social diagnosis from within the orbit of their orientation to the Christian faith. Unity or agreement was not the goal since in themselves these offer false security. It is the discovery both of common ground and inevitable

differences which minister not only to realism but ultimate trust. It is a significant comment upon the Student Christian Association Movement that these leaders sought light on their problem from persons holding very different points of view theologically and philosophically. Such a process is complicated and laborious, but it sets people free for honest inquiry, courageous decision, and as great a degree of action as most of them find possible in any case.

The Seminar did its work in several units of interest involving professional problems. For the readers of *Christianity and Society* but one unit will be discussed, that of the bearing of the Christian faith upon contemporary history and institutions. From our Fellowship, Paul Lehman and Adolph Lowe carried prominent aspects of the discussion, while several Fellowship members played a semi-leadership role from the side-lines. Dr. Lehman, recently of Wellesley College and now of the Editorial staff of the Westminster Press, was responsible for social and religious analysis with particular reference to the insights of the neo-orthodox position in theology. Dr. Lowe, an economist of the New School of Social Research in New York, brought an invaluable diagnosis based not only in economics and a prophetic interpretation of history, but also in his wide experience as a student of Western religious culture, who knows the European struggle from within, who had seven

years in England enroute to the United States, and who, now, as an American citizen, is prominently consulted as a social and economic engineer. Dr. Grace Loucks Elliott of the staff of the National Board of the Y. W. C. A. was the speaker and consultant upon the problems of the individual. Dr. Henry Nelson Wieman, professor of philosophy of religion at the University of Chicago, was a fourth in this group. Dr. Gregory Vlastos of the Department of Philosophy and Religion of Queens College, Kingston, Canada, who was engaged with the Royal Canadian Air Force, during the recent war, completed the panel.

Each speaker in this unit had precisely the same assignment. It goes without saying that he or she spoke from the angle of a particular field of study and of personal experience. Each had been asked to analyze the present scene from the perspective of his own presuppositions about the nature of man, of society, of God, and of the Hebrew-Christian heritage. The panel had been chosen with special reference to theological and philosophical differences current in contemporary American Christianity and with a view to getting a realistic analysis of the public dilemma of today's world so far as the operation of social forces is concerned.

Before reporting the concrete issues raised by the panel, a few unmistakable observations made by the participants as a whole as well as by the leaders will be of interest.

Even the members of the panel were astonished and gratified by their unanimity of social diagnosis. A wide difference in vocabulary and illustrations could not obscure the tragic monopoly of what each one must say about the

crisis of our culture in the year 1946. In spite of slight differences in emphasis and wide differences in theology these leaders came down on the same side of the line in diagnosis and to an amazing degree in clues for public procedure. Nor can it be said that the basic evil and the basic cure were different from person to person, for all found the dimensions of what they had to say in nothing short of God. This sense of the ultimate and the eternal was sharpened rather than lessened by the fact that one of these leaders spoke from within the Hebraic tradition while the other four spoke from within the Christian Faith. A second point of similarity between the five speakers lay in the naturalness with which they treated social diagnosis and religious faith as a unified whole. There was no talk of personal and social religion. The lost man and the lost society were viewed as aspects of one problem. Social diagnosis was not a neat essay to which the Christian faith was appended like the post-script to a letter. Man's problem was seen to be essentially a religious one, whether he were individual man or man compounded into groups. His economic plight, his racial "givens," his social institutions, his national and international behavior were not described as essentially secular or essentially sacred but as the stuff of life in which God operates to bring to birth His will and man's fulfillment.

The last of these general observations is that theological differences and concomitant cultural and social differences are no block to fellowship when the participants are thorough thinkers, honest and courageous interpreters, inherently humble and kind. In other words spiritual unity transcends literally impassable intellectual divergences, provided there

is *quality* of mind and spirit in each contender. At one point in the fifteen-day inquiry, the outraged sensibilities of these various leaders and their inevitable disciples in relation to the philosophical and theological differences expressed, threatened to shatter any semblance of respect and trust and to leave no room for fellowship of even a superficial variety. The kind of profound esprit-de-corps which was achieved did not come from conciliation on the intellectual premises or from some middle-ground synthesis possible only to thin or dishonest thinkers, but arose because everybody pushed harder to express *his* convictions and to see wherein the truth of God and man's present incomparable abyss are imperatives which can be faced only if one is humble, honest, and courageous.

Various phrases dominated the social diagnosis. One speaker described the need of our day as the need for spontaneous social cohesion; another deplored our loss of a cultural matrix and described our dilemma in terms of technological industry as the supreme power in the United States and potentially in the entire world. The necessity of transferring irresponsible to responsible power was urged through the setting of conditions, man's part, which will allow the creative power of God to break in. God's transforming will that men shall live as one is constantly operative and cannot be achieved by man alone, but it cannot be achieved without man's decision to seek and do God's will. When set in motion through man's redemption and cooperation, God's creative power in a world of antithetical groups works toward the freeing of groups and individuals to internalize each other's needs and interests (not economic alone, but affec-

tional, intellectual, etc.), until power tends to become more democratically and responsibly held and each person or group functions more nearly for the good of the whole. This view works out into very practical political, economic, and consultative measures. Another leader stated the problem as the contrast between hierarchical cooperation, the military or authoritarian design which climaxes in facism or nazism, and equalitarian cooperation which is the unrealized goal of democracy, in fact of the Christian view of life. Disintegration and deliverance was another way of discussing the issue of our day. Our failure is the failure to know God or ourselves and to grasp fully the nature of history. History is the fact that our existence is under time and decision. To exist in time means that the clue to what is significant is found in the truth that man who stands in nature must interpret his existence in terms other than those of nature. He is under the dominion of his memories and his hopes. Decision means that we must act. This historical approach to our problems is Hebraic rather than Greek and is the clue to the human. With the possible exception of the tragedians, the Greeks did not understand the human in life. The measure of human-ness is the degree to which our decisions are bridges, not obstacles between persons. Disintegration is decision which makes for the loss of our humanity. The essential character of our disintegration is the fact that the basic patterns of thought and life have been so expressed as to deny what is human. The basic sickness is ourselves. We are lost. Socially this dehumanization has expressed itself in the totality of the mass. We are a collection of atoms, not a community. We are basically confused about the nature of power. We

need a human versus a technological conception of power. We have technical strength with the illusion of moral virtue. Even religion is dehumanized. Protestantism is impotent because of its confusion about authority, *because of a tendency to think religiously from presuppositions contrary to Christianity*, and because it is in conflict over where we start, i.e. subjectively with our feelings or objectively with God, with Christ as Lord of life; Modern Protestants must distinguish between dogma which is good and dogmatism which is spiritual intolerance.

The analysis made good use, throughout, of the "wounded man" of the Samaritan parable of Jesus, as illustrative of the effects of irresponsible power in our day. It may be said that all men in our day are wounded, for power corrodes him who has unlimited access to it. The manager who is caught in a system is wounded. The 95 percent of the American population who has access to \$5000 or less—usually considerably less—of the total income available for all, is the wounded man. The wounds may not be primarily in economic terms though it is usually the lower income brackets which give the setting for such wounds as are meted out to Negro, Jew, American, Japanese, child, sharecropper, woman, etc. The difference between the wounds of the man in power and the man who is the victim of power is that the first *does not know that he is wounded* and the second *knows that he is wounded*. After full allowance is made for exceptions in both groups, exceptions expressed by much inertia among victims and some sensitivity among the privileged, it will prove to be the pressures of the man *who knows that he is wounded* which will be the human in-

strument in effective change. It is the man who feels his wounds and guesses at the cause who will eventually insist that the road be cleared of robbers. The road will never under any system be entirely clear of robbers, given human nature and history, but the effort to improve the highway is the effort which must never cease and which must make a difference so enormous that suffering, injustice, and war are appreciably reduced. This wounded man carries within his condition a virtue not his own. With full recognition that all men are sinners there remains the destiny of the man at the bottom to disrupt the false claim of power irresponsibly used and to exercise the role in which history has cast him. This is the class struggle, and no amount of semantics or sophistry about love and brotherhood remove the reality of this struggle. It is tragically clear that the priest and the Levite passed the wounded man by and that we do not know how much the Samaritan sought to get at the causes. We do have, however, the startling and universal testimony found in the Samaritan's deed, the testimony that we know of the truth in the act. It is the act which relates man to man and man to God. It is by the act that the validity of our knowledge and devotion both to God and to man are tested. "This do and thou shalt live" is at the heart of the Christian's outlook. It is not "this say" or "this think," though both of these are important. The issue is behavior. "*This do.*"

Even the War did not wound men so much as the great depression. Or put otherwise, war and depression are inextricably bound together. The present fears of war constantly discussed in every drawing room and in every opinion weekly are not to be taken seriously short

of another cyclical depression. Such a depression will not only be more ghastly than the last one but is the inevitable prelude to another and far more terrible war.

The evil is not technical industry. Washing machines are a blessing. The evil is the misuse of technological power, the trivialization of emotional life, the dehumanization of relationships, the building of cooperation by the hierarchical pattern in which exclusiveness, isolation, and fear become normative. The man "*at attention*" has surrendered his creative spontaneity. Perhaps in a nutshell we are engaged in the worship of the washing machine, the new "golden calf," which as an instrument of dehumanization and irreligion has no power to save man and society.

Marx, in his earlier writings, shows his fidelity to the tradition of Amos. There is prophetic insight in his recognition that the worker in technological industry is essentially a commodity and that since man's work is his life he cannot be treated as a thing without dire results. The dehumanized worker is a danger and a tragedy as well as a denial of the basic ways of God. Marx did not see the extent to which every worker's corruptibility may interrupt the tidy momentum of change which his pure dialectic implies. Neither did he see the enormous significance for good and for evil of the middle class. Marx failed to foresee the reforms which in great measure have modified, without uprooting, the hierarchical pattern in economic organization, nor did he guess to what an extent those reforms would arise from the instrumentality and the cultural cooperation of bourgeois life. These lacks do not do away with the need to reckon with Marx.

In the Hebrew prophets and even more incontrovertibly in Jesus, the Hebraic prophetic tradition challenges the Greek notion of religion as matter for the elite, or the notion that religion can be another worldly affair. Their appeal is to a structure of life in which there are absolute imperatives, an order of existence whose demands are such that to ignore them is death. This order of life is extra-historical. Its eternal and ultimate character penetrates and transforms history. "Seek me and ye shall live" . . . "Choose this day whom ye will serve." The supreme issue religiously is that God is love (justice and love were regarded as inseparable by some of the speakers, as stages of Christian grace by others), and that love is the law. The meaning of prayer was described as "thy Will Be Done" . . . there is no prayer but this, that one expose all his wishes before God and then be able to say "Thy Will Be Done." God is the supreme answer to human good. That does not mean that God is the answer to my wishes. The religion built upon wishful thinking was challenged with the contrast between the religion of consolation and the religion of struggle. Does one believe what one says? The test is his action. When one acts he is all there. Inertia, lack of decision, neutrality, is action in a terrible form.

In the second four masterly addresses and in Mrs. Elliott's able summary about the individual, as well as in the leaders' panel held chiefly to thrash out the sharp philosophical and theological differences, nothing so pat as solutions was offered. As the first round had combined diagnosis with values so the second round continued diagnosis with emphasis upon the Christian outlook and the various social proposals now before thinking men.

The theological controversy was clear cut, well handled, and relevant. It centered around the epistemological problem; the nature of God; the nature of revelation; the nature of Christ and the Resurrection; the role and influence of the apostle Paul; the issues implicit in the terms naturalism and supernaturalism; the significance of the theology of the Reformation for this day. Constant reference was made to the Bible and to the basic and unparalleled insights of Jesus and of the Christian way of life. The churches as institutions were assumed but not discussed except by implication. Social institutions, including the churches, stand in need of redemption. The Church Universal as the one and only conveyor of the Christian explanation of life and values was central throughout the series. Protestantism was accorded a place more relevant to the realization of equalitarian cooperation than was Roman Catholicism. The issues raised by the insistent development of technological industry have cut *deep* into contemporary culture including its religious and Christian aspects. The issue of quietism was discussed with some difference of opinion as to its modern manifestations.

The discussion of political and economic procedures befitting the Christian, was, so far as the one hundred and fifty participants were concerned, much more cautiously approached than was the theological debate. It is easier for Christian laymen and leaders to enter into theological controversy with conviction as to which side they are on than to engage with any certainty in a debate involving moral responsibility for breaking with the status quo in economic and political terms involving Christian action. This reticence did not characterize all of the

members of the group nor any of the five special leaders. In the case of the latter, all were sure that the status quo in economic and political organization is totally unequal to the strains now put upon it and incompatible with the Hebrew-Christian heritage. They differed of course as to the logic of given theological presuppositions for behavior in the social scene. They differed also in the degree to which they advocated reformism versus revolution. None advocated violent revolution, although all were realistic about the possibility of global and national violence if conditions grow much worse.

One summary fairly acceptable to all of the leaders said: 1. Each of us has a wall around his soul which shuts out the sorrow and needs of others and prevents one's feeling it as his own. Jealousy, envy, pride, arrogance, fear, shut us in. Also with groups is there an impenetrable wall—barriers so awful that man alone cannot break them down. 2. God is seeking to get through these walls between persons and groups. 3. The power of God in Christ is our way because Christ released people, made a break through the wall. 4. Hence would it not be true that all Christians must pray that God break down those walls, if need be by one's own repentance, shame, failure, and pain, if need be by drastic shifts in power and in assumptions about power upon the part of all of us. Another leader added to this the fact that prayer will be seen to be real only when it is embodied in decision and action. Another reminded us of the Bible as the Christian's repository of guidance and truth for such decision and action. All agreed that there is no escape from conviction and action for the Christian; that *sense of commu-*

unity is the closest way of describing what releases man from anxiety and isolation. Hierarchical cooperation is essentially dehumanizing and isolating, while equalitarian cooperation based as it must be on God's will and operation within Reality is the only essentially human, and hence spiritual, outlook upon man's problem. The practical and new implications of equalitarian cooperation are, however, enormous as well as imperative. Members of the group drew away, with many of the old fears and sophistries, from the specifics which appeared as the inevitable accompaniment of the Christian calling in social and political living.

It was pointed out that England, Central Europe, and the United States are those who speak of the passing of a civilization. The colored races and the Asiatic peoples, the Russians, and the newer national entities across the world feel themselves at the dawn of a new day. There seems to be some correlation between decline of the "power-holding" races and nations and the sense of abyss and paralysis which pervades America today. Like Athens and Rome we shrink

from the vital hordes whose day seems to be dawning. The fact that they too like us will come to decline unless they learn how to live, does not rob them of their little day. How may we in America recapture our sense of adventure and of destiny and become worthy of the insights to which we are heir? Some felt that England, and in a different way, Russia have taken some part of this step. Whether they have or have not does not modify the demand upon us as individuals and as a people. The most meaningful clue seems to be in such identification with the outlook, the aspirations, the needs of all men and particularly of the wounded men, the man whose day is dawning because he has nothing to lose and everything to gain, in struggle. This is possible only as men become responsible servants of God in Christ and members of a society built more and more upon the equalitarian and cooperative design. This is a society in which the dignity of man and the ordering of groups is recognized as the result of man's response to God's purpose and way of work in the Universe.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE SOURCE OF HUMAN GOOD,
by Henry N. Wieman. University of
Chicago Press: 1946. Pp. 309. \$3.50.

This book will impress every reader by its power and intensity. It must impress members of our fellowship by its combination of a radiant faith in the "creative good" as shaping the world with an original interpretation of the good as radical social progress and growth. It must alarm us by what will appear to us as a misunderstanding of the neo-orthodox position, and by an ultimate division of the world between good and evil.

From the first to the last line the book analyzes the "creative good," which manifests itself in all created good but whose further progress may have to break the resistance of this limited created good. The creative good cannot be anything but a structure of events; it is a creative event consisting of four carefully explained sub-events. It is, in the world of man, always a social event, a growth of qualitative meaning through intercommunication. But it is very far from coinciding with human and social control; being a truly creative event, its impact transforms, along with everything else, the mind of man itself, so that the mind cannot anticipate that which it will be able to recognize only after its own transformation. Entering into the creative good by pious devotion and prayer is man's salvation from himself. Much destruction is contained in the creative event; the greatest manifestation of creative good, the life and death of

Jesus, had to break the pretensions of the then greatest created good, Judaism, by the crucifixion of the Messiah, in order that the Resurrection of the Christ could grip the minds of men irrespective of national boundaries. So we see the way of creative good only in retrospect and can help it advance only by an active life in faith.

The logic of the argument leads to a dynamic understanding, not only of the social good, but of the truth also: it consists of structures of possibility which may not have existed before the most recent intervention of creative good. The argument leads to an instructive critique of the established identification of sin with pride, since frivolity cannot be interpreted as pride but impedes the growth of creative good. The discussion is less fruitful where it divides justice from love.

But why in the world does the author call his doctrine of creative good "naturalism"? Why is he so highly critical of the idea of the transcendent God, calling it a doctrine of despair? In his own view, creative good has eternal creativity, is more than any of its manifestations, cannot be understood by traditional science, and is multiple and at the same time unified? And whence, on the other hand, does the author know that his creative good has always conquered, and will always conquer evil? And worst of all, if created good turns into evil, as it certainly does, why then is it necessary to introduce an independent evil, at war with the creative good? This implies

that there is a second source of creation. Here indeed the author opposes orthodoxy and any form of monotheism. But to what avail?

EDUARD HEIMANN

CHRISTIANITY TAKES A STAND, AN APPROACH TO THE ISSUES OF TODAY. Edited by William Scarlett. Penguin Special, New York.

This symposium on present day social problems begins with an essay on Christian social principles by Angus Dun. Then there is a large section entitled "World Order," with papers on the United Nations, by Sumner Welles; our relations to Russia, by Niebuhr; the treatment of ex-enemy nations, by Hocking; and the moral meaning of the atomic bomb, by Arthur Compton. The second section, dealing with "Domestic Order," begins with a paper on the minorities question by Mrs. Roosevelt, followed by studies of the Negro Problem by W. Russell Bowie; the Japanese American Evacuation, by Bishop Parsons; full employment, by Francis Perkins; and man and the state, by Eduard Heimann. There is a concluding essay on the duty of the Christian in the modern world, written by Stringfellow Barr.

Despite the variety resulting from diversity of authorship, the book has a very real unity. This unity derives first from the man who edited the Volume, who gathered together the contributors, and who inspires the Commission of the Episcopal Church which, in a general way, stands behind the work. Of him could be asked with simplicity the apostolic question, "Who is offended and I burn not?" His prophetic outrage and outcry is not only in the introductory essay and in the selection of topics, but

in the very ink and paper. From this comes a unity of urgency and of pace which never relaxes till the end of the book. There is also a unity in the unargued conviction that Christian concern reaches out to all the matters and dangers of the social order. To socialist Christians this is a matter of principle, and to adherents of the social gospel it is a thing of habit, but to many Christians it is not yet apparent. We can never forget that for a large group, Christianity is solely an instrumentality to prepare individual souls for the "next world." In this respect the frontier is very much with us. To the present reviewer, the greatest value of such a book as the one under review is that it will persuade Christians—one, a hundred, a thousand—that Christianity does "take a stand."

This is the kind of book people will read. It is intended for a wide use and such a use it will undoubtedly have. Anyone who reads these lines and who is looking for a book to place in the hands of ordinary readers, particularly as a basis of group discussion, may find this to be the very book for which he is looking. Some years ago the English Malvern Conference issued a "manifesto" which elicited wide discussion, but "Malvern" never got itself a book, unless Temple's "Christianity and the Social Order" be that book. The American Commission which traces back to the Malvern Conference has now a popular book which should reach and instruct many.

This is a book of solutions. It is satisfyingly definite in this respect and should satisfy those critics who say that Christianity is good at diagnosis and becomes vague at the point of cure. On the other hand, solutions are matters of individual

insight and vary even among Christians, as Angus Dun points out in the beginning. Moreover, socialist Christians are ever wary of "Christian" solutions, and at the book's end Stringfellow Barr reminds us how indecently eager Christians, and particularly American Christians, are to get to the stage of action. Sometimes it is more important to inquire about goals than about means to ends. And sometimes it is important to ask why there is very little we can do. If there is a weakness in the book it is that it does not sufficiently probe the secular character of western society and study the differentia which marks Christian social action from non-Christian social action, whether religious or secular.

CLIFFORD L. STANLEY

ON FINAL GROUND, by *Harold A. Bosley*. Harper and Brothers. \$2.00.

Harold Bosley gives proof of his powers as a great preacher in this book of twenty-two sermons. Those who have had the privilege of hearing preaching of this high order should count themselves fortunate indeed. Every sermon is characterized by a profound approach to the spiritual problems of our time. One is well aware that here is a man speaking out of a wide background of scholarship, and yet there is a sincere simplicity of approach. Illustrations are wisely used, not over-done, nor brought in just for the sake of having some.

To the readers of this journal the work of Harold Bosley should be of interest because many of us have often thought of him as being on the other side of our position. We have known him as a pacifist and as a follower of the "Chicago" school of theology. At least

we have always associated him in some way with the naturalistic approach of Wieman. However, with the publication of *The Philosophical Heritage of the Christian Faith* and now this book of sermons, we are not so sure as to his proper classification. In a recent personal letter Harold Bosley wrote that he was "trying to strike a balance between a dead liberalism and a hog-wild neo-orthodoxy." That seems to sum up the position found in this book, and the neo-orthodox will find him a worthy opponent.

The first six sermons, after the title sermon "On Final Ground," are devoted to a discussion of the authority of the Bible, Jesus Christ, and the Church today. They are liberal in their approach and yet very definite in their conclusions.

The two best sermons in my mind are the ones entitled "God—The Distant Drummer" (a phrase from Thoreau) and "Where Judgment Begins." The first is a prophetic plea for the claims of God upon us in all that we are and do. "You must listen to a Distant Drummer and keep step with Him, though you seem to be out of step with your own day." (P. 121.) The second sermon is a good example of how we might preach the idea of judgment and make it real to people. Here the preacher best illustrates his powers of organization, and here are sermons within a sermon, as for example: "A true judgment of another is kept humble by the realization of our kinship with one another, kept merciful by the realization that we too have sinned, kept loving by the realization that in the sight of God, all have sinned and come short of His glory, kept responsible by the realization that we have an infinite obligation to help an erring

one towards the path of righteousness." (P. 158.)

Harold Bosley has always been a fearless fighter for social righteousness within the city and nation, and in every sermon he brings the faith to bear upon the social, political, and economic realm. At times, to be sure, he betrays something of his old pre-war isolationism, but on the whole I would say he has been taught better by the times.

There are many among us who would question certain individual sentences such as when speaking to a seminary group he says, "Yet we are either perfectionists or we step outside the tradition of Christian ethics." (P. 258.) This reviewer makes no pretensions of scholarship, but I certainly think that Bosley is off the course at this point. I have nothing but the greatest of praise and admiration for Harold Bosley as a pastor, a preacher, and a man of faith. I am sure the reading of this volume will give us cause for hope if this be typical of the preaching in our day.

W. OWINGS STONE

REVELATION AND REASON, by Emil Brunner. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. Pp. 430. \$4.50.

Although most of the materials found in this book, particularly the sections dealing with revelation, have been explored previously in other books by the author, this volume is one of his major works, taking its place alongside *The Divine Imperative*, *The Mediator*, and *Man in Revolt*. In the systematic reworking of older materials around the central problem of this book, nuances do emerge which, to English readers at least, were not previously available. This is particularly apparent in the more positive

relation between revelation and reason in this volume, as compared, for instance, with that in his *Philosophy of Religion*. But this does not mean a fundamental change in position. The primacy of revelation is attested specifically by the title, *Revelation and Reason*, as over against the usual designation of "Reason and Revelation." While the history of Philosophy in its various aspects is accepted as a partial manifestation of truth, it is dismissed, as heretofore, because of the autonomous character of reason. But the logos of reason under the Divine logos receives some positive treatment in this book.

Reason is distorted and cannot correctly be understood apart from revelation. But revelation cannot be received without reason. Here reason is an integral part of man as man, even fallen man. It is man who receives revelation. Unless he has the ability to receive it, we are in the realm of magic and not in that of the God-man encounter. This, it seems to me, is more than a point of contact; it is the very condition of revelation. However, Brunner is insistent that this does not in any way detract from the *sola gratia*.

Reason appears as part of the givenness of things, as structure, as the logos of meaning. This includes everything from mathematics to marriage. Of all this, God is the ground. (318) But this does not mean we know God. It may point, as a distorted reflection, to the wisdom of God. (321) The eternal logos in the appearance of Jesus Christ needs to transform the logos of reason in increasing degrees as one moves from the impersonal, such as mathematics, to personal relations.

The Word of God thus does not annihilate reason, but releases it from its

false autonomy for the service of faith. (429) While we must be committed, we must also understand. In this sense, every theologian is a philosopher, even though he tries to restrict himself to the exposition of ideas in the Bible. (390) The very fact that he uses language makes it impossible for him to escape reason. But even more important is the concept of reason and philosophy for the layman who is not strictly a theologian. "Where there are Christians who are not theologians, a Christian philosophy is taken for granted," (395) penetrating into every area of life and speaking to men where they are. While reason never includes revelation, "revelation includes, in faith, the reason," claiming it for its service. (388)

The relation between revelation and reason, though it is central and implicit throughout, occupies a relatively small part of the book. While the major part deals with the delineation of revelation, its relation to reason is emphasized in this review because it concretely shows Brunner's fundamental difference from Barth and reveals a similarity, though not an affinity, with the thought of Tillich on this problem.

To the most significant materials in the section on revelation belong the rejection of natural theology, the acceptance of general revelation, and the views on non-Christian religions. However, there seems to be a vacillation in this book between the disparagement of philosophy and non-Christian religions, and their conception as distortions which must be placed under the Christian revelation. While the latter is in accord with the doctrine of general revelation, the former seems inconsistent with it. Perhaps this disparagement is a remnant

from a previous view in the midst of what is now a thoroughly constructive statement on the relation of revelation and reason.

JOHN DILLENBERGER

EYES OF FAITH, by Paul S. Minear. Westminister Press. \$3.00.

Dr. Emil Brunner, on his recent visit to this country, spoke of a revival of theology in both Europe and America which was liquidating the old controversy between modernism and fundamentalism. Modern theology is "liberal" in the sense that it avails itself of all critical insights which have developed in recent centuries and does not involve itself in the idolatry of obscuring the word of God in the words of a written record or in the contingent circumstances of a given period of revelatory history. It is nevertheless orthodox in the sense that it has long since ceased to regard the Bible merely as a part of the evolutionary human quest for God. It believes that the Bible contains the self-disclosure of God; and that in the apprehension of that disclosure there is both the wisdom and the power which comes from the destruction of the old self (repentance) and the reconstruction of the self by a power not one's own.

No book of recent years better illustrates this new and yet very old theology, which is giving the religious life of our churches its present most powerful impetus, than Professor Minear's new volume *The Eyes of Faith*. In this book the best in Biblical and systematic theological thought of recent decades has been distilled and given a new unity. The author declares that he has written it to prove that "there is atomic energy in the Bible." He has indeed looked

deeply into the mystery of the Bible and explained why it contains, not words, but the word from God, which resolves the human dilemma and restores and recreates man's sinful existence.

R. N.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND SOCIAL POLICY, by *John Bennett*. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.00.

No book has appeared in recent years which comes closer to expressing the most fundamental convictions of the Fellowship which sponsors this journal than this volume by one of our members, Professor Bennett. It is a book which illumines the absolute character of the moral obligation in Christian faith in its relation to the endless complexities of actual social situations in which the obligation to one's neighbor must be applied.

Professor Bennett discusses the four basic Christian strategies in this field: (a) The Catholic strategy which approaches all specific issues upon the basis of fully defined mediate as well as ultimate ethical norms. (b) The strategy of withdrawal from the more ambiguous social responsibilities for the sake of individual perfection. This is best exemplified in modern pacifism. (c) The identification of Christianity with particular social programs, of which most Christian socialist movements of the past were exemplars. In dealing with this strategy Professor Bennett calls attention to our Fellowship as holding such a position with reservation. (d) The strategy of the double standard for personal and public life, of which traditional Lutheranism is the best example.

Dr. Bennett does not find any of these strategies adequate and therefore suggests a fifth, which contains some of the elements of the previous four. It is "one

which emphasizes the relevance together with the transcendence of the Christian ethic and which takes account of the universality and persistence of sin and the elements of technical autonomy in social politics."

The elaboration of this fifth strategy and his discussion of the role of the church includes a definition of what Dr. Oldham and Dr. Bennett have defined as "middle axioms." These are working principles of justice which are somewhat in the category of the Catholic "relative natural law" but they do not have the fixed character of the latter. They are pragmatically conceived and are fluid, requiring periodic adjustment to the moving historical situation. Dr. Bennett's definition of these middle axioms brings out the full wisdom of his social theory and his ability to do equal justice to the ultimate principles of right by which conduct must be guided and the endless varieties of situations to which it must be adjusted.

His final note on "natural law" comes to what seems to me the correct conclusion that "it is a mistake to believe in existence of a self-sufficient reason that always knows the good but it is equally a mistake to deny that Christian moral conviction overlaps with a broader knowledge of the moral order that confronts Christians and non-Christians alike." This is a position which is neither Catholic nor radical-Protestant. It underlies the whole of Professor Bennett's theory of social policy and is, I am convinced, a truly ecumenical position in Christian social theory. It does not merely split the difference between opposing Christian strategies. It has the possibility of becoming a new creative center for such strategies.

R. N.

BEYOND THIS DARKNESS, by Roger L. Shinn. Association Press, New York, 1946. Pp. 86, viii. \$1.00.

This little book by a member of our Fellowship is packed with wisdom and profound Christian insight. The author was in his senior year at Union Seminary when war started in Europe. He waived his ecclesiastical exemption, was drafted as a doughboy, went to Officers Training School, and eventually was commanding a company of infantry when he was captured in the Battle of the Bulge. All this experience has gone into the writing of this book. The author has assimilated his war experience in terms of his Christian faith which has, in turn, been deepened by his experience; and the result is a stimulating, challenging, and revealing statement about dying, living, and the Christian faith.

The book starts out from the standpoint of the post-war world, the author quoting a man who said, "Even in the worst fighting I had the feeling that it could be worth while. But when I see the way the world is going, I wonder whether it is all a miserable farce." In the midst of this disillusionment (piled on top of the cynical scepticism which was already rife before the war), Mr. Shinn asks, "What does it mean?" His book is an attempt to supply some answer to that question.

The author points out briefly the nature and character of the motivations which moved men in battle. He shows that they were religious, though not in a conventional sense. He points out that war tests men's faith as few other events in life do; it shows what they really believe to be worthwhile: "War tests a man's faith. If the faith is less than thoroughly honest, a matter of vain repetitions, or only a superstition, war will find it out. If it is shallow, a group of

conventional beliefs, or only a habit, war will destroy it. For war is one of those times—like any great time of sorrow, or decision, or temptation—when man's spirit stretches out to its heights and its depths. Pretense is unmasked and life laid bare. Then faith is destroyed, or faith becomes real." The faith that motivated most men was, to be sure, something less than Christian. It recognized the truth in "he that findeth his life shall lose it"—that "I-for-the-sake-of-myself am not enough"—but it either ignored or was baffled by "he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." With this as the test, the *experimentum crucis*, of the Christian faith, the author goes on to show its relevance to the problems we face in peace.

This reviewer has recently been going over the literature, Christian and otherwise, which has come out of both world wars. He finds this book one of the very best, short as it is. Certainly it shows as few others have done the meaning of war and its relation to peace in terms of a dynamic Christian faith.

RICHARD W. DAY

WASTELAND, by Jo Sinclair. Harpers. \$2.50.

FOCUS, by Arthur Miller. Reynold. \$2.50.

An interesting phenomenon this, that among the best-selling, highly advertised novels of the very present are two books which deal very frankly and entirely concretely with the knotty problem of Jewish-Gentile relationships.

Miss Sinclair's novel is the story of a young man of Jewish birth and tradition who has desperately tried to deny his Jewishness. Along with his brothers and sisters the surname of the family had been anglicized; he, however, had also

exchanged Jake for Jack. Leaving school early he accepted a position with the photography department of a newspaper in which job he had done well. But always in his work, and in his personal relationships there had been the fear that someone would discover his birth and antecedents. Always he made every attempt to be a part of the Gentile social world, while a call was ever with him not to deny his blood and his heritage.

The book opens with his sister convincing him to visit a psychiatrist who had helped her. The medium of expression then in the novel is through the "recall" experienced in the office of this sympathetic and capable psychiatrist. And this medium is well employed by the author: the conversations between patient and doctor have a distinct flavor of reality. Gradually the doctor is able to diagnose the cause of the young man's constant unrest. He must return to the beliefs and practices of his fathers. The final words of the book are thrilling as the young man, the youngest son of the family, returns to the family Passover Sedar to ask the customary question, "Wherein does this feast differ from all other feasts?"

The pathos of the book is excellently developed. This pathos resolves itself into a fundamental question on the lips of all morally concerned Americans, Why should any American feel that he must deny his racial or religious or national origin in order to succeed or even live happily in this country? Yet in this land of freedom for all there must be countless millions who would, if they could, change the color of their skin or the shape of their nose or the contour of their features.

From the entirely opposite front Arthur Miller portrays in "Focus" another young man who is Gentile but looks like a Jew. Although this book

is not nearly so well developed or written as "Wasteland" it yet is apt and adroit in dealing with the complexity of various peoples living in one community. The dominant group wishing to remain on its pinnacle of privilege will if sufficiently stirred emotionally descend to any level to hold power. In "Focus" the young man loses his job because he looks like a Jew; he finds it difficult to find other employment in a Gentile firm, and he is so proud of his own birth and lineage that he could not seek work in a Jewish concern. Only difficulty is in store for him. Even in his own community in Brooklyn the "Christian Front" makes trouble for him, along with the truly Jewish storekeeper at the street corner.

Unable to achieve even sufficient integrity to stand his ground he appeals to the Jewish merchant to move away so that he who is not Jewish may more peaceably remain. His request to the Jewish merchant becomes even more urgent when both he and the Jew are attacked by hoodlums from the Christian Front. The Jew appeals to his sense of justice at the level of the least common denominator, but even then he only thinks of protecting himself and his own interests and safety. Instead of fighting for justice for all, in the face of his own danger he merely turns to the Christian Front and appeals for membership for himself. So goes a small mind in the time of danger.

And yet how easy to say "a small mind" will do thus and so. What would any other particular citizen do? It's so like the ordination question so often asked, "Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel . . . whatever persecution or opposition may arise to you?" Who knows?

ADOLPH BEHRENBURG

